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Hello, everybody!

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Island of Sodor Railway

This comic belongs to .....

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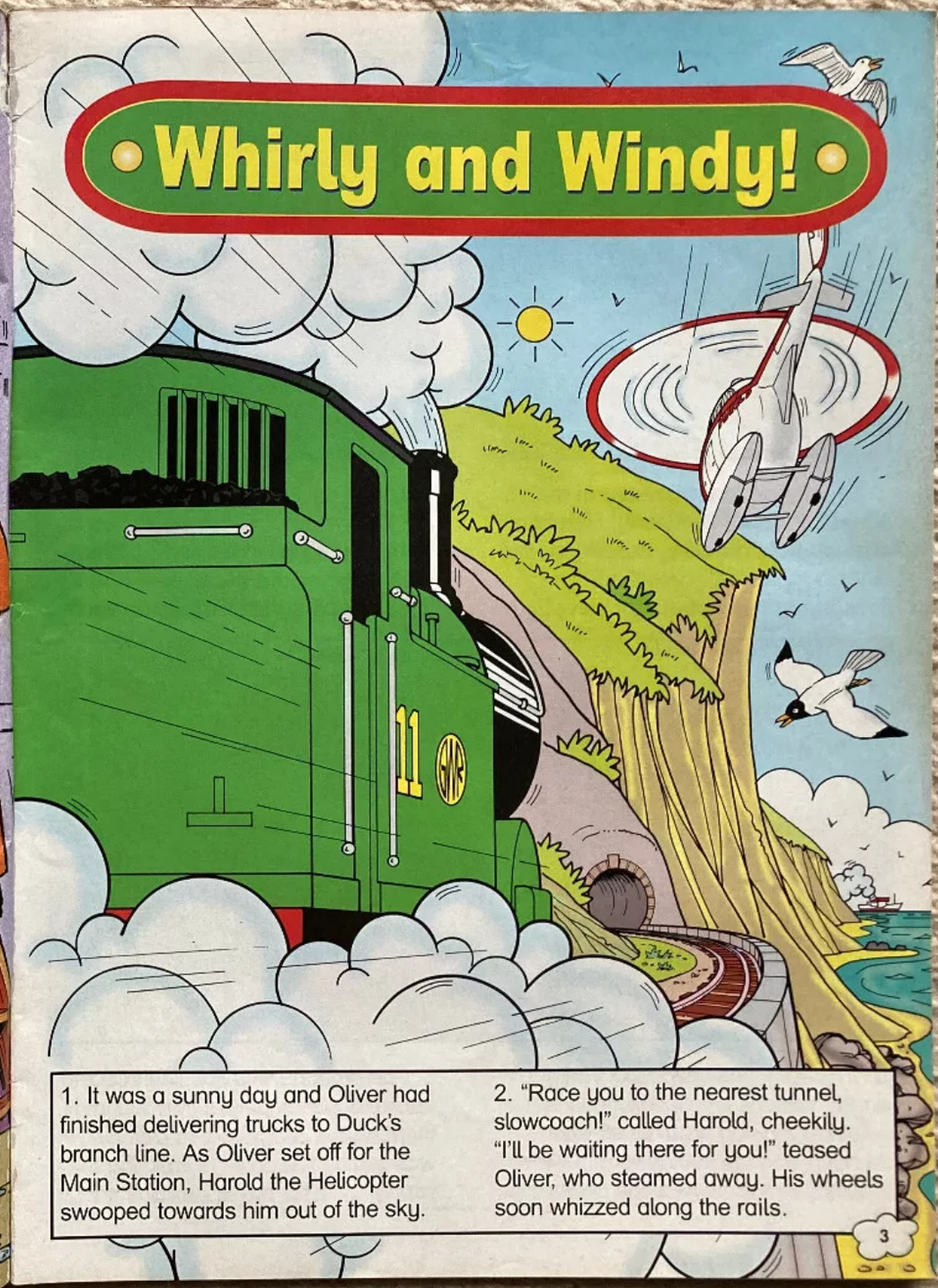
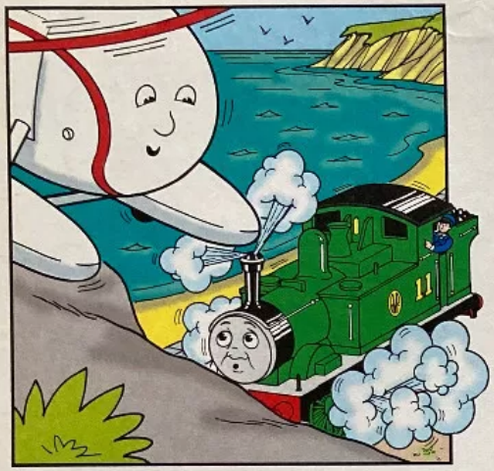
Whirly and Windy!

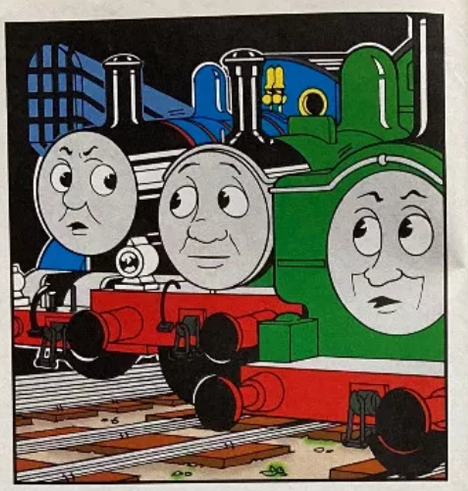


1. It was a sunny day and Oliver had finished delivering trucks to Duck's branch line. As Oliver set off for the Main Station, Harold the Helicopter swooped towards him out of the sky.

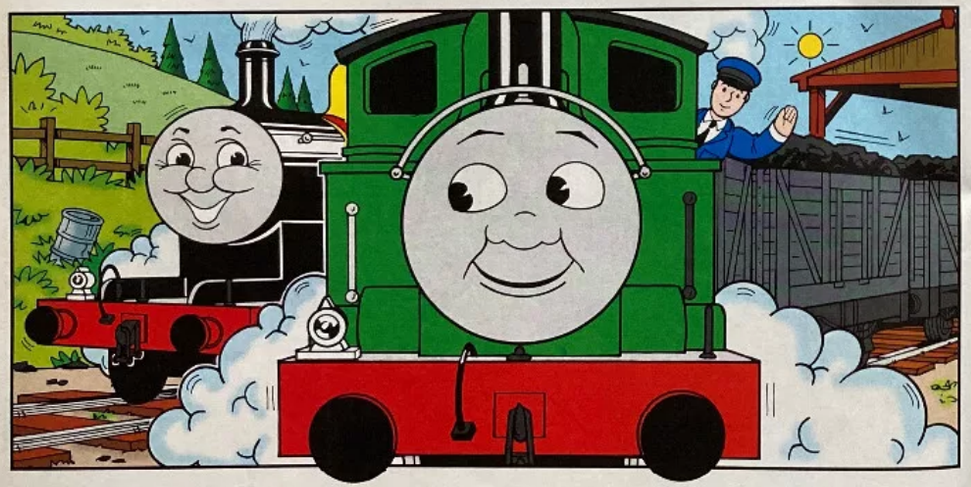
2. "Race you to the nearest tunnel, slowcoach!" called Harold, cheekily. "I'll be waiting there for you!" teased Oliver, who steamed away. His wheels soon whizzed along the rails.



3. Oliver had to brake hard at the tunnel. But, to his dismay, Harold was already hovering happily by the entrance. "I won!" he called. "I'm lucky to have big, whirly blades!"

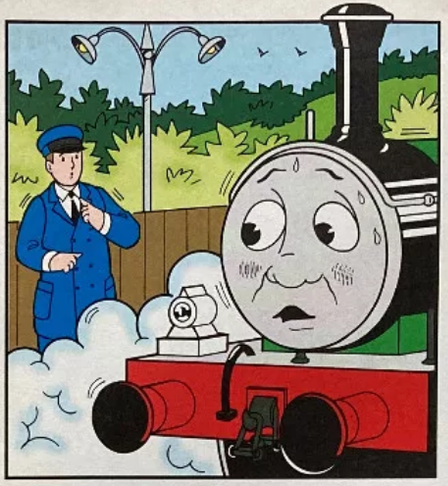


4. Laughing, Harold flew away. That night in the shed, Oliver heard how Harold had challenged some of the other engines and beaten them, too. "He's just showing off!" they agreed.

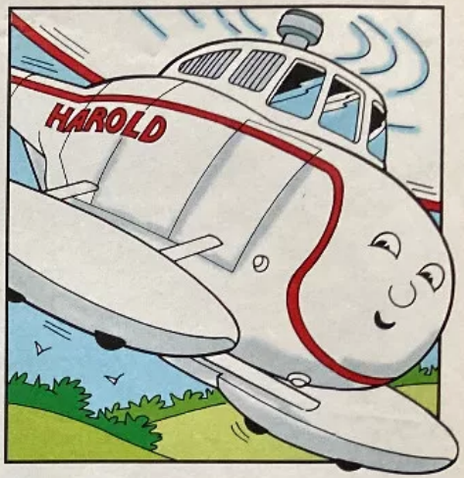


5. "Harold needs bringing down to earth!" sniffed James. "His head is even bigger than his blades!" Next morning was unusually warm. Oliver went to work on Duck's line again.

6. This time, he was coupled to some trucks. But, strangely, Oliver found them harder and harder to pull. He was getting very hot. "Something's wrong," said his driver, anxiously.



7. He checked Oliver's temperature gauge. "No wonder," the driver told Oliver. "Your boiler's overheating." Oliver crawled to the next station where his driver shut off steam.



8. Next moment, Harold appeared overhead. "What glorious weather!" he called. "I can make a nice, cool breeze as I fly along. But you look really hot and bothered, Oliver!"

9. "I bet you wish you had my big, whirly blades today," added Harold. "For once, you're right," gasped Oliver. "I don't suppose you could fly lower and fan me with them?"

10. "Ha! Of course! I never thought I'd ever hear an engine agree that helicopters are more Useful!" Harold boasted. Slowly, he came down and down until he was just above Oliver.

11. But Harold flew too low. The noise was deafening. Suddenly, the powerful draught from his whirling blades sent papers and magazines swirling up from the platform kiosk.

12. The Waiting Room door was blown shut, startling the people inside. Rubbish from litterbins scattered everywhere and the Stationmaster lost his cap. "Harold, Stop!" he yelled.

13. Harold quickly took off again. "Sorry!" Oliver called to him. "It's my fault. I didn't know a helicopter could cause so much chaos!" "I was only trying to help," sulked Harold.

14. It had all been a mistake. But some good did come out of it. Harold didn't boast again for a long time. "His big, whirly blades were big, windy blades, too!" smiled Oliver.

PEEP! PEEP! THE END!

Don't miss . . .

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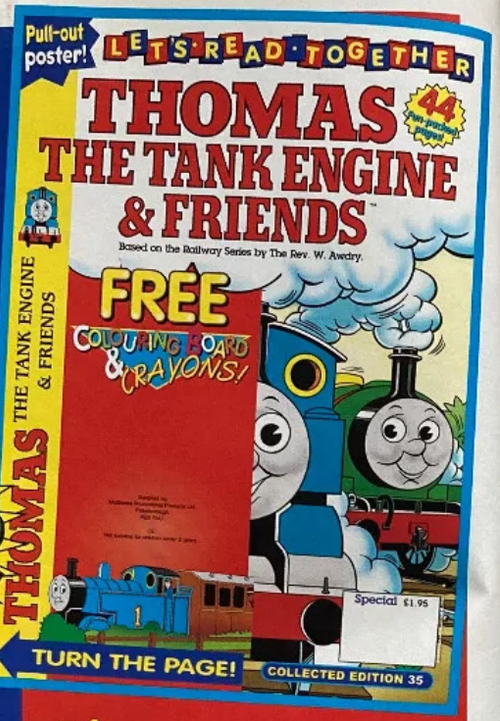

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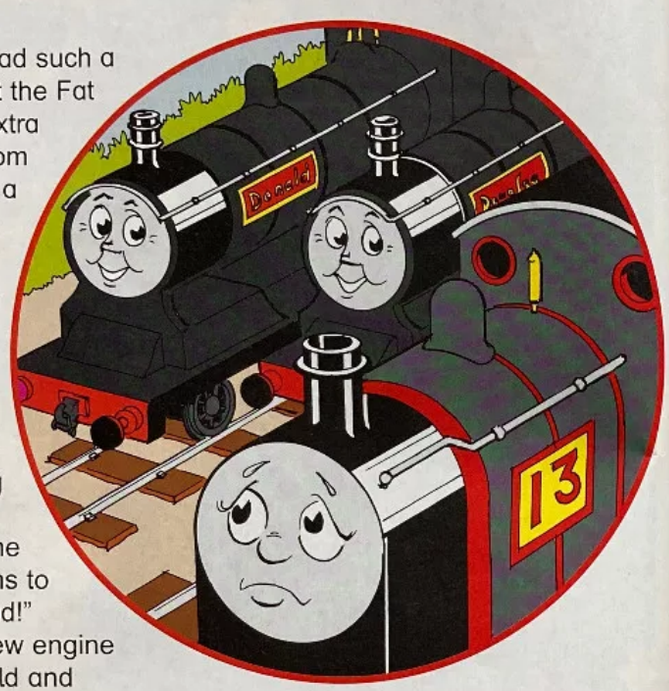
Love

The Unlucky Engine!



Donald and Douglas had such a lot of work to do, that the Fat Controller asked for an extra engine to be sent over from the Mainland to help. On a cold, dreary morning, the new arrival turned up, a grey, sad-looking engine. On his side was the number thirteen.

"Och, will ye look at that, Douglas!" said Donald. "Number thirteen. Well, it's unlucky for some!"

"I am unlucky," said the engine. "Everything seems to go wrong when I'm around!"

That afternoon, the new engine started to help. But Donald and Douglas weren't used to working in a team of three and got confused! Donald took some trucks of gravel to the harbour. They were shunted into the wrong siding by mistake, and when Number Thirteen turned up, he took the trucks all the way back to where they had started.

"Och, It's no' your fault," said Douglas. "It's just bad luck!" But the bad luck didn't stop there. Donald broke down, and Douglas got buried under a pile of sand, when a workman accidentally pushed the wrong lever in the loading yard.

At the end of the day, the Fat Controller said, "You three engines have done less work than two!"

"Aye, we've been very unlucky today!" grumbled Donald, looking at Number Thirteen.

The next day things went from bad to worse. Number Thirteen was puffing along the coastal line, when suddenly, there was a landslide. He was hit by an avalanche of rocks, and his boiler and firebox were knocked all out of shape.

"I'm the unluckiest engine of all!" wailed Number Thirteen. "Now I'm bound to be sent for scrap!"

The two twins felt sorry for the unlucky Number Thirteen. "Och, he wasnae much use to have aroond," said Donald, "but he was always tryin' his best!"

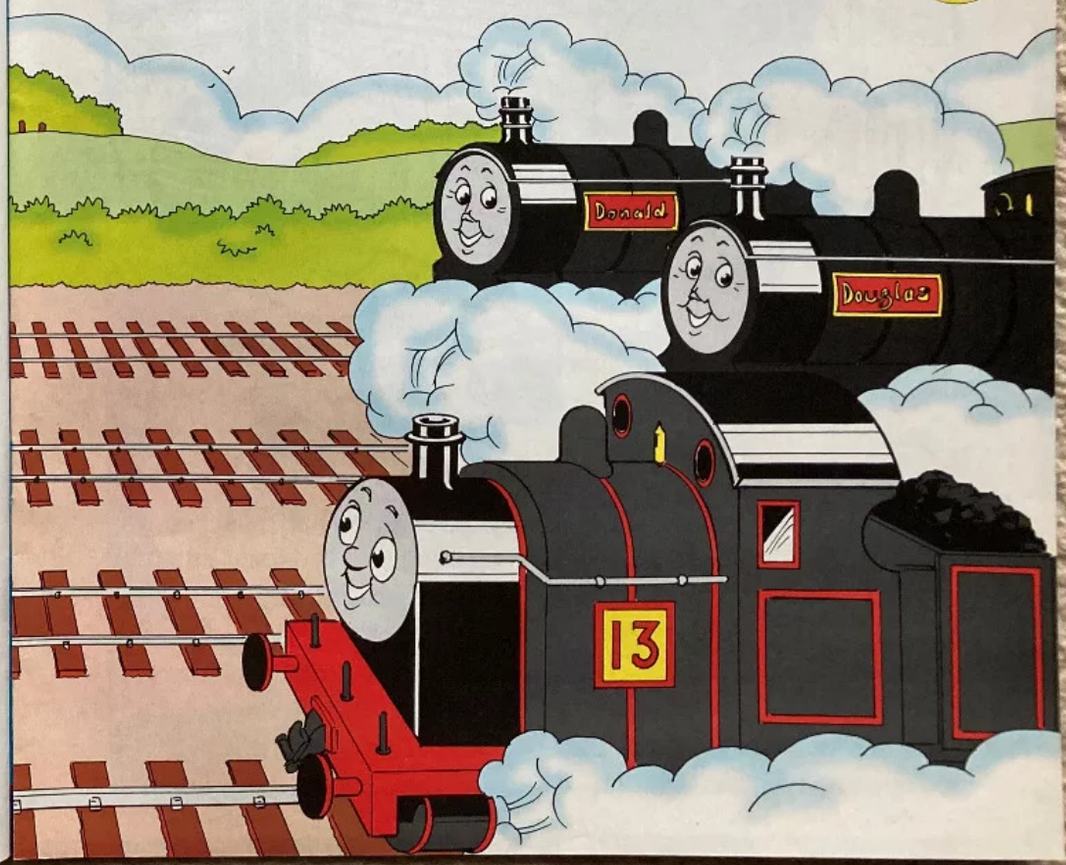
The next day Number Thirteen was sent to the workshop.

"Are you going to s-s-scrap me?" asked the engine, nervously. He was very worried.

"Scrap you? That's nonsense!" said the Fat Controller. "But we are going to change that firebox of yours. It is much too small for an engine of your size."

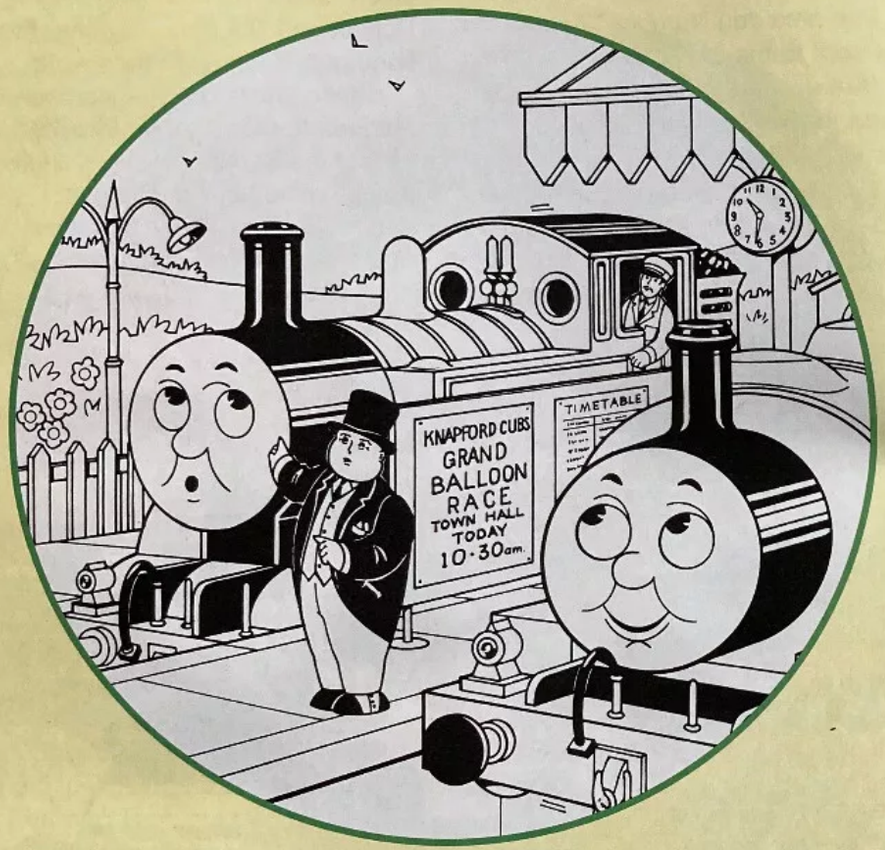
When the work was over, Number Thirteen felt like a new engine. With a bigger firebox he was much more powerful, and he could make greater steam. Soon he was back helping Donald and Douglas. Together they sped happily through their work.

When it was time for Number Thirteen to return to the Mainland, he told the Scottish twins, "I shall always remember my time on Sodor, Because this is the place where my bad luck changed into good!"



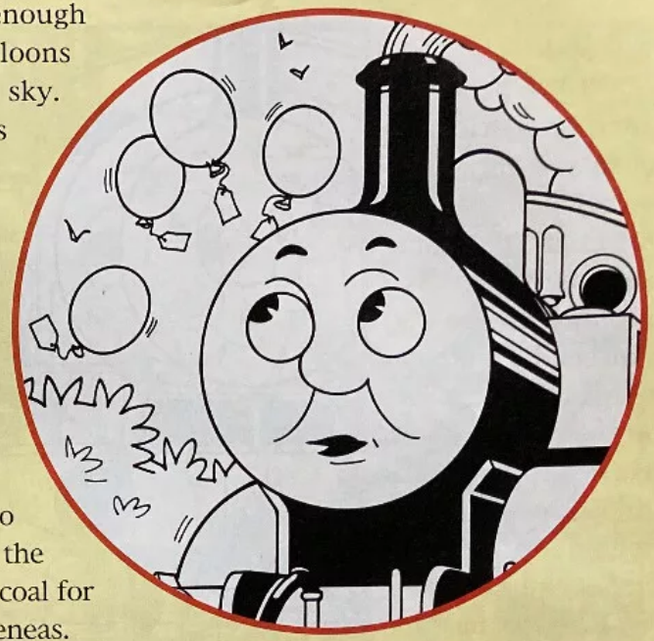
A read & colour story

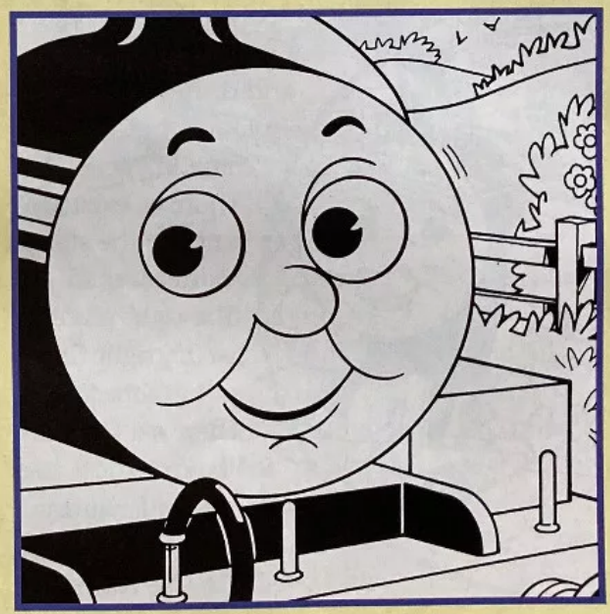
The Balloon Race!



1 One morning at the Main Station, the Fat Controller wanted a quiet word with his young engines, Thomas and Percy, about an unusual event. He pointed to a poster and said, "As you can see, there's going to be a Grand Balloon Race today at half past ten, organised by the local cubs! It's going to be very colourful and fun, but please don't let it distract you from your work! Thomas looked at the station clock. "Ten-thirty, but that's now!" he peeped, excitedly.

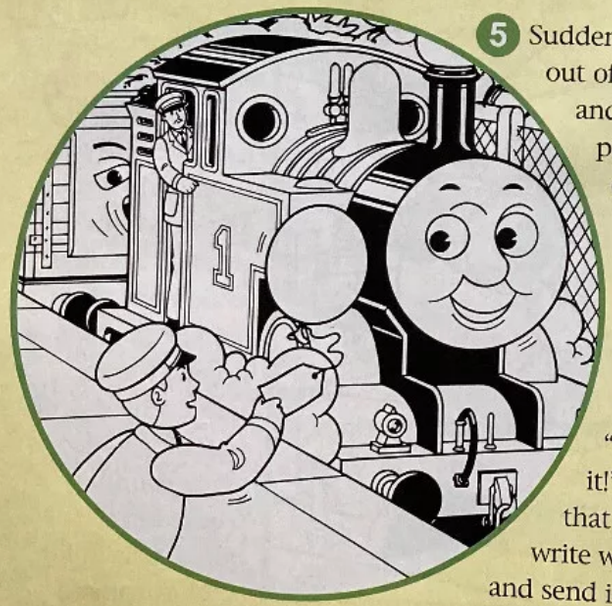
2 Then sure enough hundreds of balloons appeared in the sky. Thomas kept his eye on them. "Come on Thomas, we've seen the balloons, now there's work to be done!" said Thomas' driver. Thomas sulked because he had to go all the way to the quarry line with coal for Skarloey and Rheneas.



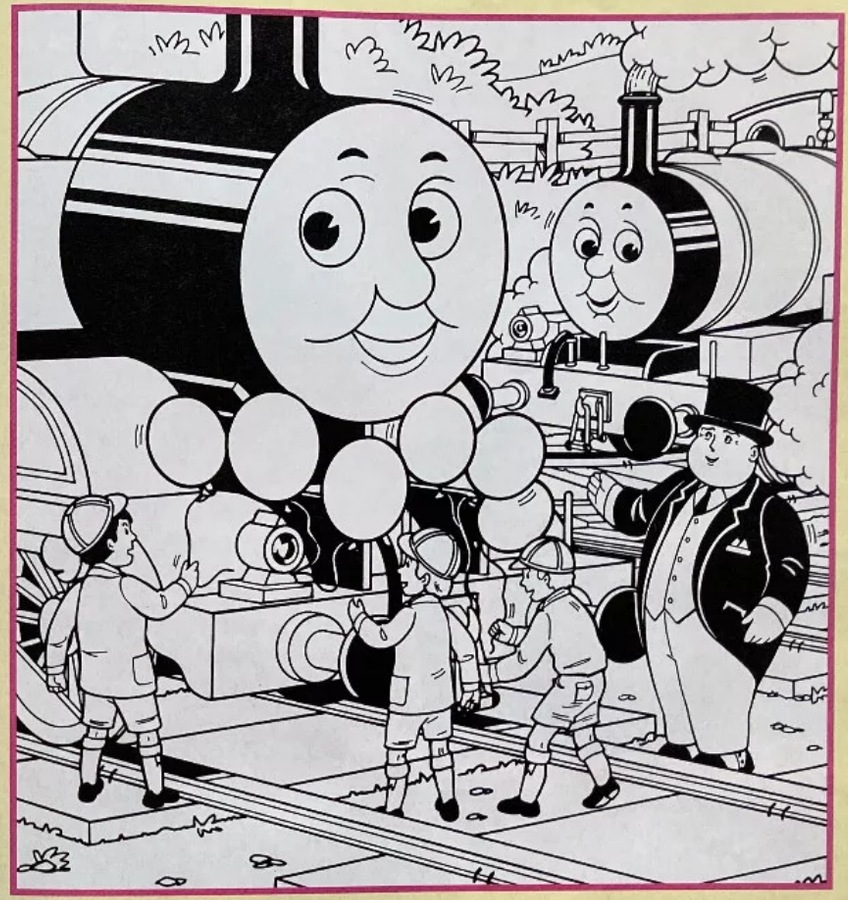


3 "There's no wind today so the balloons will all hang around the town and I'll miss all the action!" moaned Thomas, as he went off to work. Percy was hoping for an interesting day of watching balloons while shunting trucks in the yard, but he was in for some surprises!

4 Suddenly, "BANG!" a balloon burst on a prickly bush and Percy nearly jumped off his rails! Then came another "Bang!" as grumpy George flattened a balloon. "This is bad for my nerves!" shuddered Percy. At the quarry line, Thomas was telling Skarloey about the balloon race he was missing.



5 Suddenly a balloon floated out of the guard's van and drifted along the platform! "Come on, catch it!" peeped Thomas, excitedly. Luckily the station porter was in the right place at the right time and grabbed it! "There's a label on it!" he called. "It says that the finder must write where they found it and send it to the Town Hall.



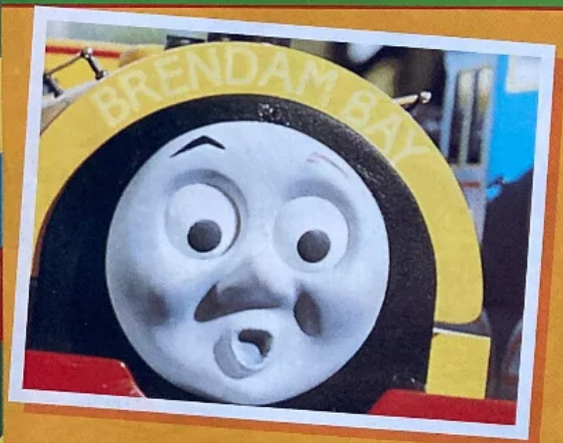
6 Thomas' driver grinned, "Thomas saw it first, put his name down!" Well, Thomas just beamed! The next day, the news spread that Thomas had won the balloon race! He kindly offered the prize money back to the cubs who were very grateful and they decorated Thomas by tying balloons all over him. The Fat Controller and Percy watched "Don't tie too many balloons to Thomas, he might float away!" Percy joked. Thomas grinned back, "Don't worry, Percy, they won't get rid of me that easily!"

The end

Boco the Diseasel!

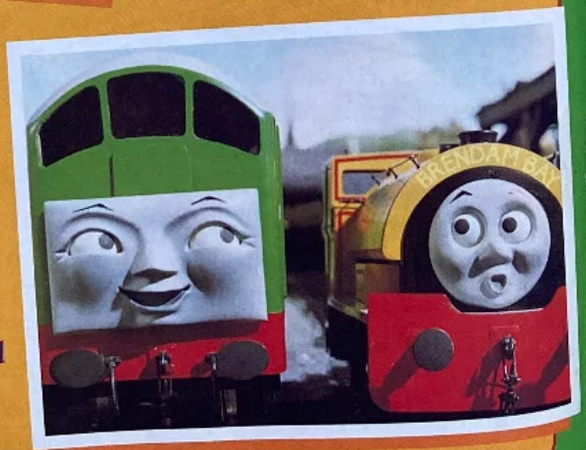
Based on *The Railway Series* by the Rev W Awdry.

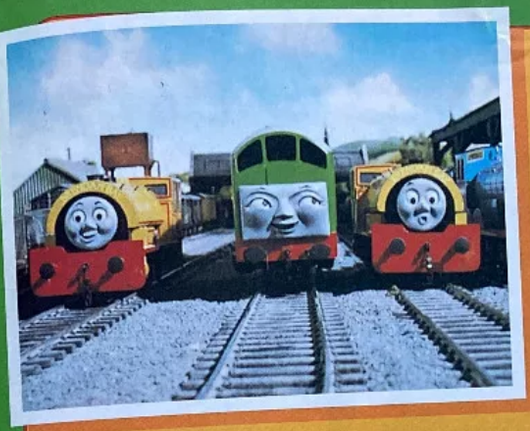
Bill and Ben are twin tank engines. Each has four wheels, a tiny chimney and dome, and a small, squat cab. They're kept busy pulling trucks for engines on the main line, and for ships in the harbour. Their trucks are filled with china clay. One morning they arranged some trucks and went away for more. They returned to find them gone. The twins were most surprised!



1 Their drivers examined a patch of oil. "I think a diesel has taken your trucks," they said, wiping the rails. "A what'll?" asked Bill. "A *diseasel*, I think," replied Ben. "There's a notice in the shed that says, '*coughs and sneezles spread diseasels*'," said Bill. "Who sneezled and brought the diseasel?" Then they went to find their trucks.

2 "Let's trick the diseasel! He doesn't know we're twins," Bill and Ben sniggered. Creeping into the yard, they found the diesel with the missing trucks. Bill went alongside him while Ben hid behind. "I want my trucks," he said. "These are mine," said the diesel. "Go away." "You're a big bully," whimpered Bill.





3 Bill went off and Ben came forward. "Truck stealer!" he hissed. Then he ran away and Bill took his place. The poor diesel was dizzy. "Are there two of you?" he asked, in a daze. "Yes, we're twins," they said.

4 "We're trying to rescue our trucks," they squeaked. Just then Edward bustled up. He told the twins not to be rude. "But he stole our trucks!" they said. "This engine is a Metropolitan Vickers Diesel-Electric, Type 2," said Edward. "We're sorry Mr-er..," they stammered. "Never mind!" the diesel said, kindly. "I'm Boco. I'm sorry I didn't understand about the trucks."

In Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends next time, you can read the story "Donald's Duck."

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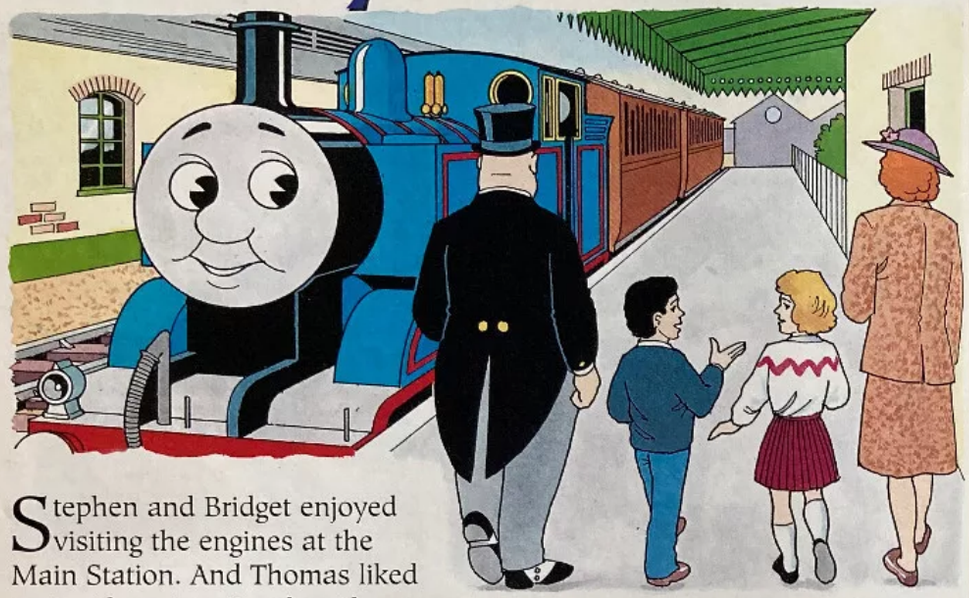
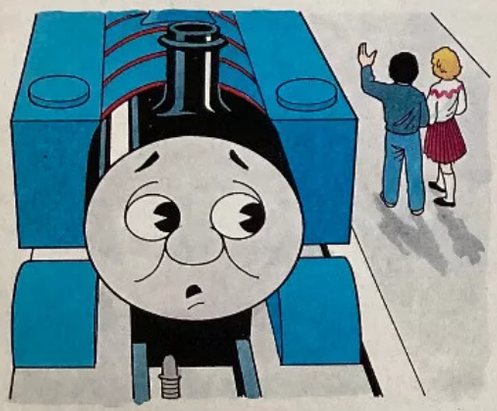
Trusty Thomas!



Stephen and Bridget enjoyed visiting the engines at the Main Station. And Thomas liked seeing them too. So when the little tank engine heard he was to take Stephen, Bridget and Lady Hatt to Wellsworth, one day, he was very happy.

Soon he stood ready and waiting, with his faithful carriages,



Annie and Clarabel. "Stephen and Bridget always come and say hello to me before I set off on a journey with them," he told his carriages. "Look! Here they are now," called Annie, as she spotted the children and Lady Hatt heading along the platform. The Fat Controller was with them. But Thomas was in for a shock. Strangely, Stephen and Bridget walked right past him!

The children were so busy talking to each other that they hardly seemed to notice Thomas at all. "Peep! Peep!" he whistled.

But Stephen and Bridget just waved and quickly called hello before they stepped inside Clarabel. "I wonder what's wrong?" said

Thomas, puzzled. "Perhaps I've upset them. But I can't think how!"

Thomas was very worried as he steamed on his way. "It's most unlike Stephen and Bridget," he thought, gloomily to himself.

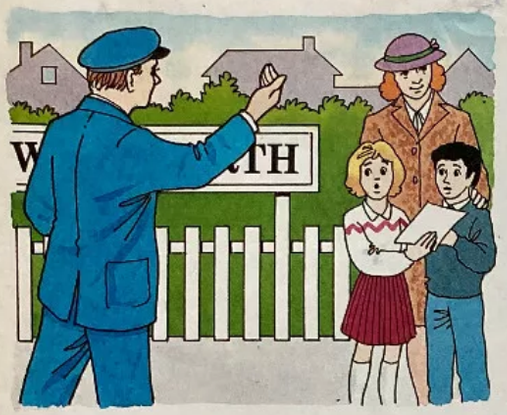
But then he cheered up as he approached Wellsworth Station. "They're sure to speak to me when I arrive," he smiled.

To Thomas' amazement, Lady Hatt and the children rushed straight past him again as they made their way to the Town Hall. "Oh, dear!" groaned Thomas. "Now I know something's happened."

Thomas was so unhappy he could not work properly all afternoon. He accidentally bumped Annie and Clarabel together.

Later, he began to roll backwards instead of forwards at a junction and he almost overshot a signal as well. "Really Useful Engines are careful engines!" said his driver. "But I care about Stephen and Bridget," said Thomas, sadly. "They've almost completely ignored me twice today." "We'll soon find out why," replied his driver, "when we collect them."

Later, he rolled into Wellsworth Station again. Stephen and Bridget



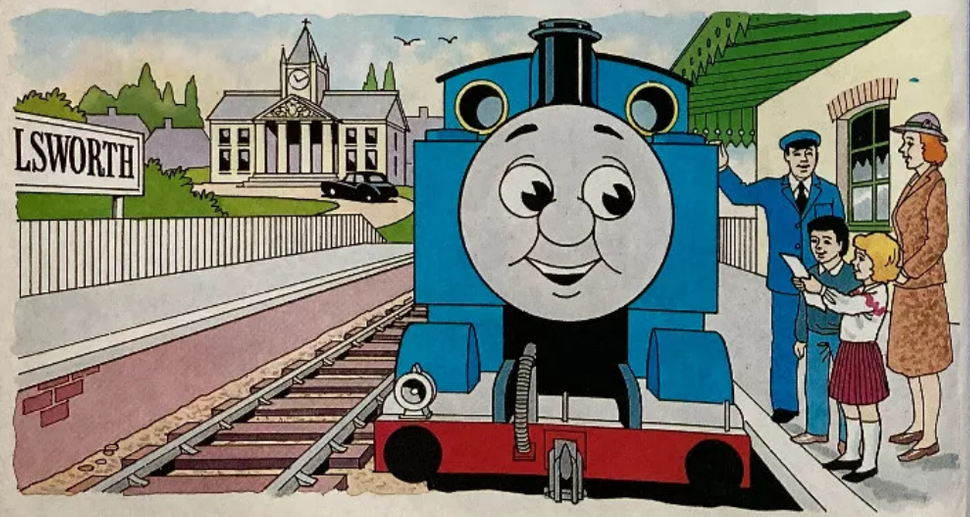
had just left the Town Hall with lots of other adults and children. The Mayor was leaving too. "Please come and talk to Thomas," called his driver, when the children appeared on the platform. "He doesn't think you're friends with him any more!"

Stephen and Bridget were very sorry to have upset Thomas. "We've been so busy thinking about you," they told him. "Why?" asked Thomas. "We wrote a poem and had to think of a title. We called it 'Trusty Thomas'," began Bridget. "We entered it in a special competition at the Town Hall and it won. The Mayor even read it out!"

How Thomas puffed with pride. "I've been very silly," he said. "Would you read it to me?" "Of course," smiled Bridget. Thomas loved it! This is how it went:

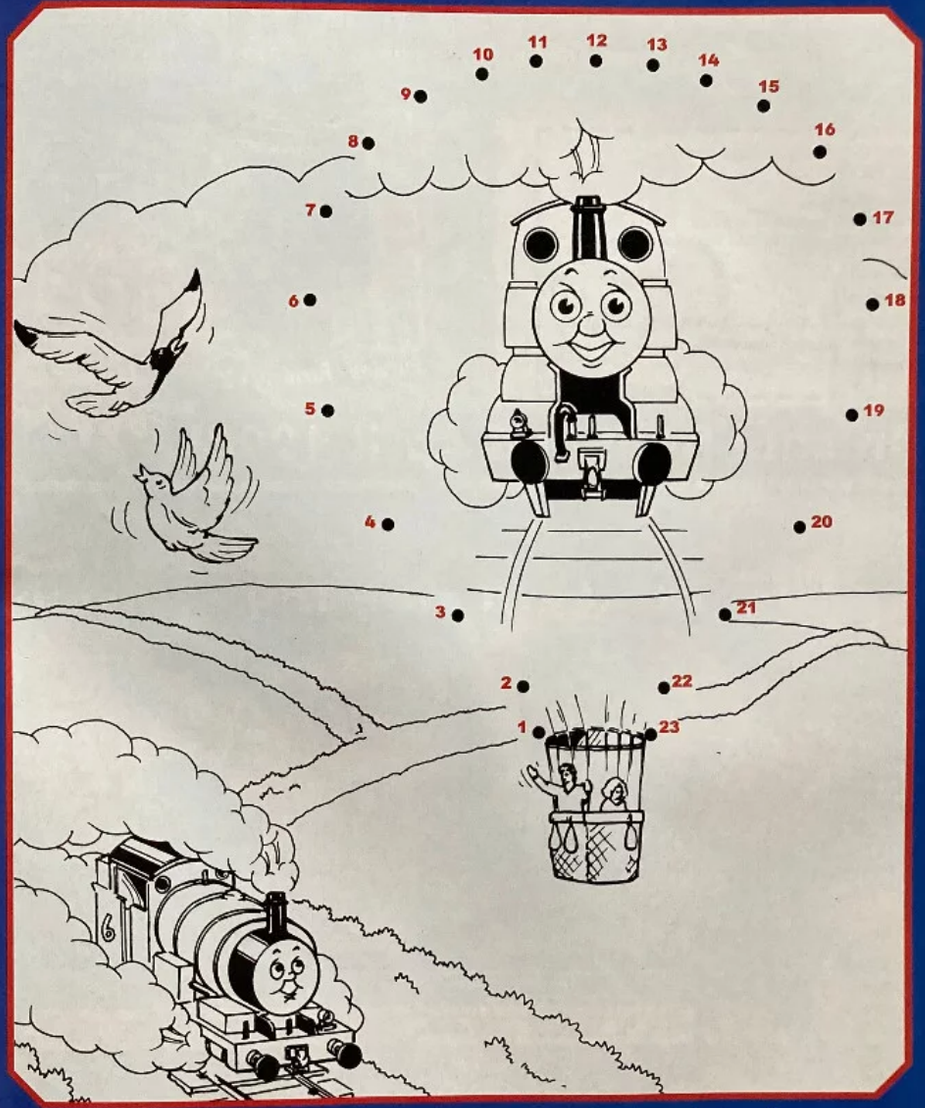
Thomas is smoky, he makes
lots of steam,
But when he's washed and polished,
see his paint gleam.
Thomas is Useful, Thomas
is blue,
Give him a wave and he'll
whistle to you!

The End



Dot to dot!

Percy looks up to the sky, what does he see floating by?



Now count how many birds are in the picture!

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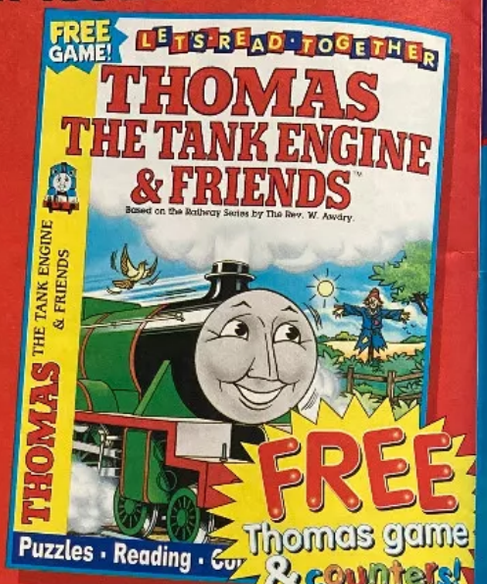

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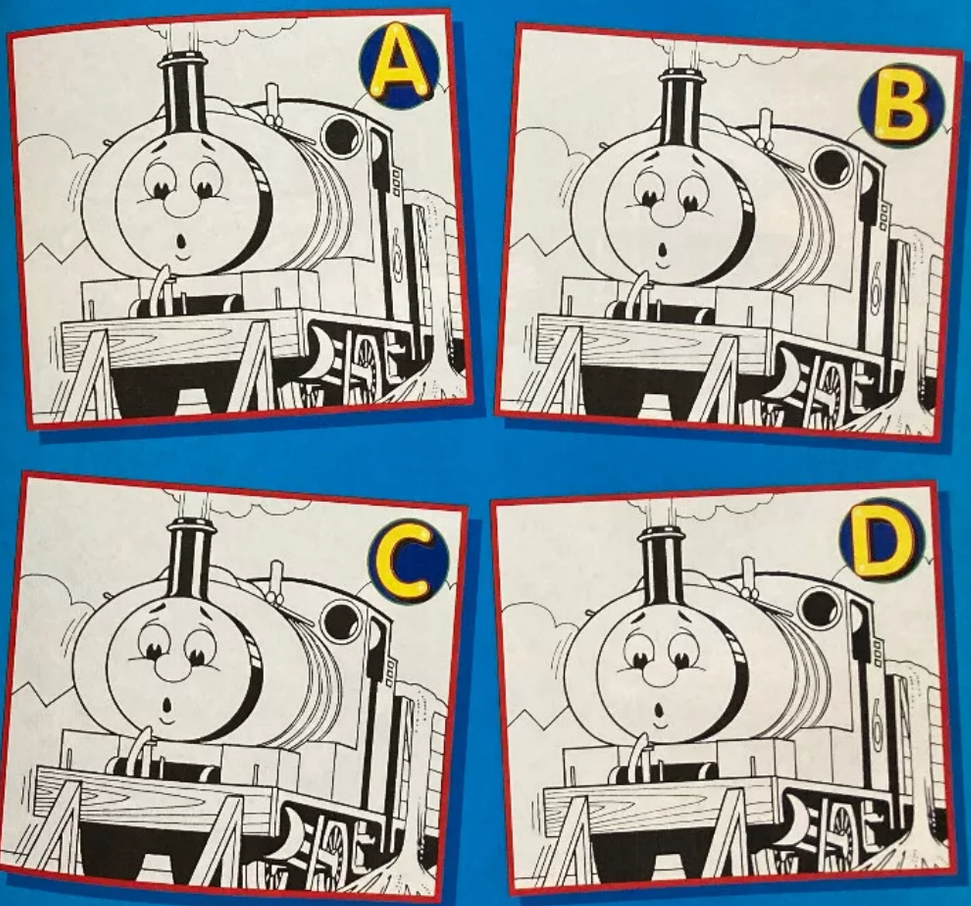
Odd One Out!

Look carefully at the 4 pictures of Percy below. Which is the odd one out and which three are the same?



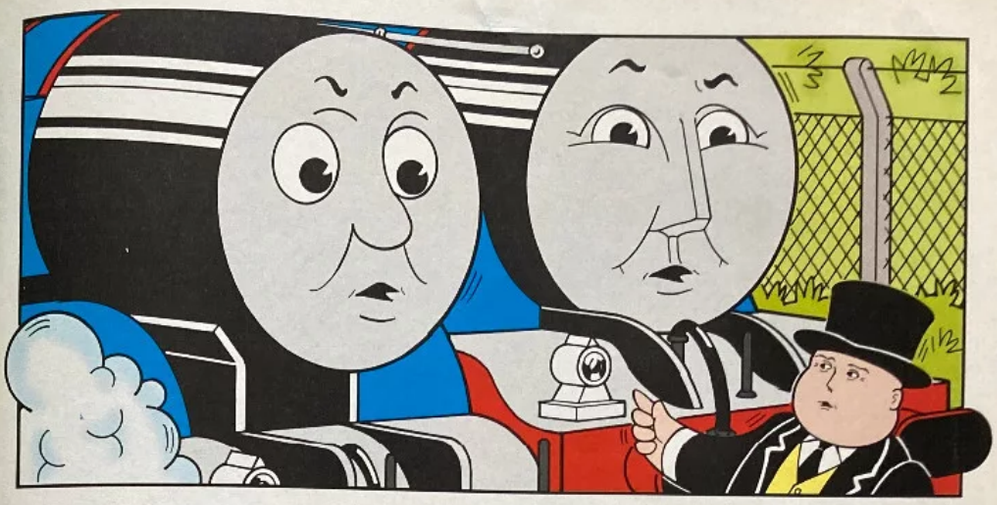
When you've worked the odd one out, colour in your engine friend!

ANSWER: Picture C is the odd one out because Percy's number is missing.

A Puzzle for Percy!

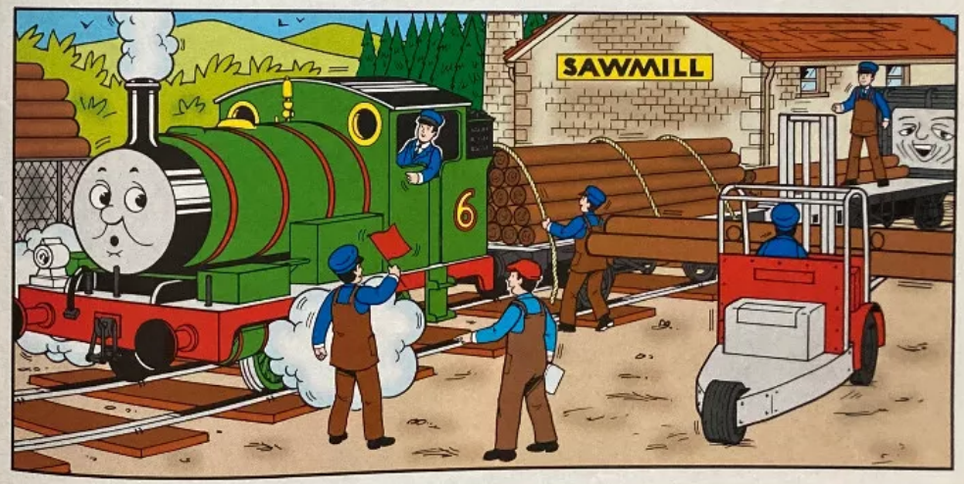
1. "I've got a special mission for you today, Percy!" announced the Fat Controller one morning. Then he gave Percy's driver a list of places to go to and things he was to pick up.

2. "When you've both collected everything, it's all to be delivered to Suddery for a surprise project. I'm keeping it a secret until the opening day!" continued the Fat Controller.



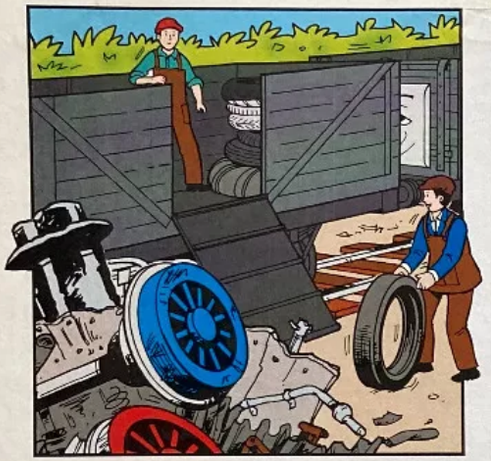
3. The other engines were jealous. Gordon spoke first. "If it's so important, I should be doing it!" Then Thomas said, "I'm the Really Useful engine here, let me do it!"

4. The Fat Controller made himself clear. "Your express will not pull itself, Gordon!" he said sternly. "And Thomas, you will be busy on your own branch line today!"



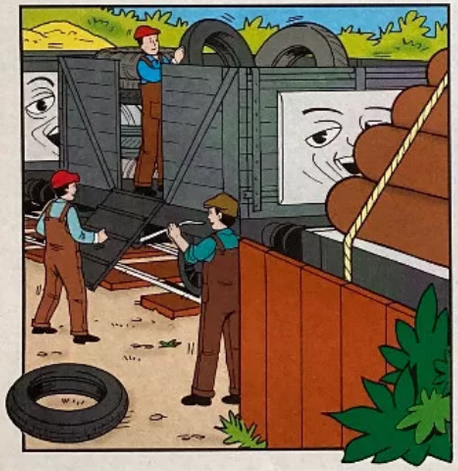
5. "I wonder what this surprise project will be!" peeped Percy, as he set off on his mystery tour. His first stop was the saw-mill where he was loaded with some long posts.

6. "Oh, I see! We're delivering telegraph poles!" exclaimed Percy. "There's nothing special about that!" he said. His driver laughed, "Nice try, Percy, but you're wrong!"

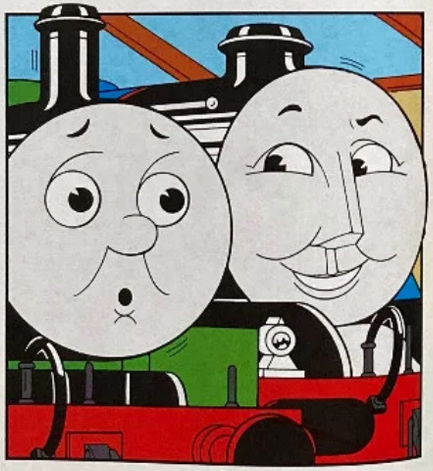


7. At the scrap-yard, Percy was loaded with lots of old tyres. He guessed again, "So they're making a big, wooden cart and these are for the wheels!" He was wrong again!

8. Poor Percy just couldn't work it out, even when he went to a builders' work yard to have two trucks loaded with sand, and to pick up some pipes and a length of rope.



9. Percy took everything to the project site where workmen were waiting. "I'll be very interested to see what you can make with this lot!" he whistled, as they unloaded.



10. In the shed that night, Gordon pulled Percy's leg, "That wasn't a special mission, Percy. The Fat Controller just likes to keep you young engines busy!" he said.

11. A week later, Percy's puzzle was solved! He was invited to watch the opening day of the town hall's big present to all the town's children. He was amazed to discover that all the goods that he had collected had been turned into a really exciting adventure playground! "Well worth the effort!" peeped Percy. "Gordon had me worried for a while!" he laughed.

12. The Mayor of Suddery opened the adventure playground with a speech. At the end of it he said, "I'd like to say a big thank you to Percy for collecting all the materials we needed to build the playground, and to his driver for keeping it a secret!" Then he cut the ribbon and all the children ran in, waving and grinning at proud Percy. He was happy to have been Really Useful!

The mail train!

Please send your letters, pictures and drawings to Mail Train, Thomas, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

Star Letter

Dear Fat Controller,
Sometimes the trucks make me laugh a lot when they are naughty. Are they ever good or nice or kind?
Yours sincerely,

Roy Tolley, aged 7 ½.

I'm glad that the trucks make you laugh but the engines don't find the trucks very funny at all! They find them a bit too cheeky! The trucks very rarely behave themselves and they enjoy being naughty and getting the engines into trouble!

If we print your STAR LETTER, you will receive a Branchline Playtrack as a prize!

4 year old Roddy Stark drew a picture of Gordon the proud, blue engine!

Prize Poem!

3 and a half year old Nick Wray wrote this fabulous poem for his favourite engine, Henry!

HENRY IS AN ENGINE GREEN!

Henry is an engine green,
He's very nice and very keen.
He once got bricked up in a tunnel,
And was dirty from his wheels to his funnel!

Liam & Aidan Reeve, aged 4!

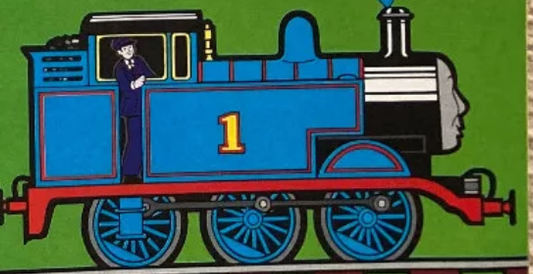
Michael White, aged 3!

Jordan Curry, aged 3!

Harvey Smallwood, aged 3!

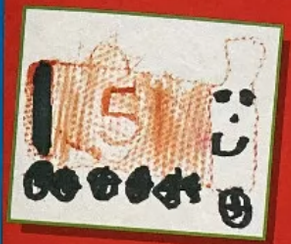
Jamie Broad, aged 3!

Ellison Hall, aged 3!



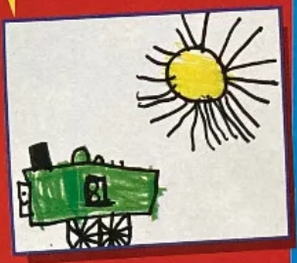
Anyone who has a drawing printed on this page will win a set of special Thomas Glitter Stickers!

Kevin Threadgold, aged 5, has sent me this excellent drawing of Duke!



Thank you to Jon Dye, aged 5, for this super picture of James!

This picture of Duck was a joint effort between Jonathan Phillips, aged 6 and Christopher Phillips, aged 3!



Happy Birthday!

Ethan Du-Crow, aged 3, George Willmer, aged 3, Peter Hart & Thomas Willmer, aged 7!

Also to Antony Hollins, aged 6, Stuart Moss, aged 9, & 2 year old Sally Brown!

Peep! Peep!

Easter Competition!

Kinnerton Confectionery are giving away 24 Easter Egg Gift sets! In each box you'll find a yummy milk chocolate Easter Egg and assorted Thomas and Friends milk chocolate shapes! Plus, there's a colourful Thomas cut-out on the back of each pack!

If you'd like to win one of these delicious prizes, just tell us:

WHO BRINGS THE EASTER EGGS ON EASTER MORNING?

A SANTA CLAUS

B THE FAT CONTROLLER

C THE EASTER BUNNY

Just write A, B or C on a postcard and send it with your name and address to: Thomas/Easter competition, Marvel Comics, Panini House, Coach and Horses Passage, The Pantiles, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5UJ.

All entries must be received by April 9th 1998.

This competition is open to all readers other than employees and their families of participating companies. We cannot accept any responsibility for prizes lost or damaged in the mail. The Editor's decision is final and no correspondence shall be entered into.

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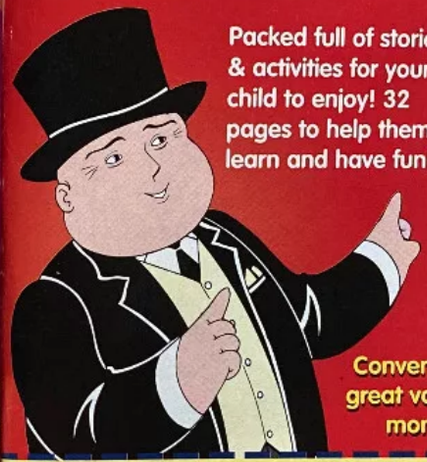

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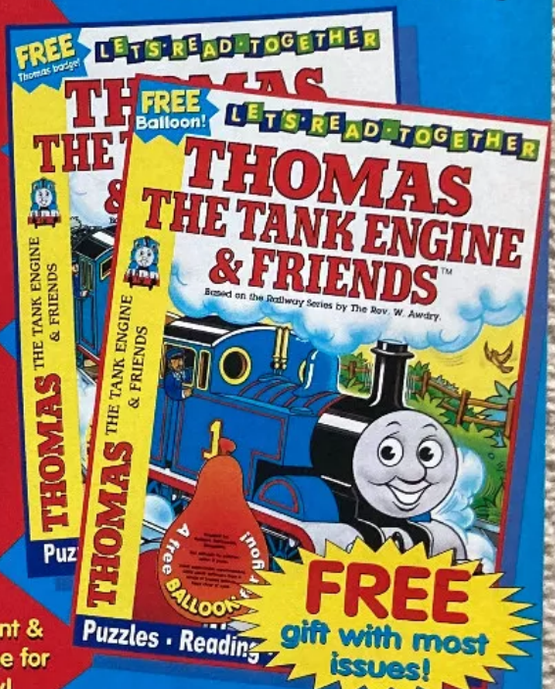

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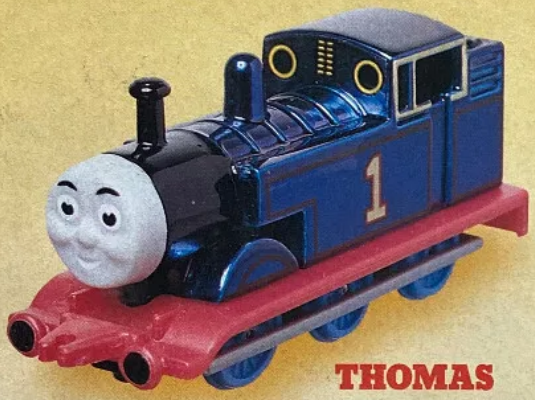
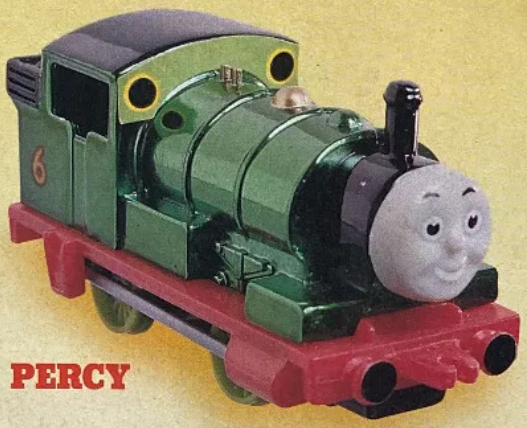
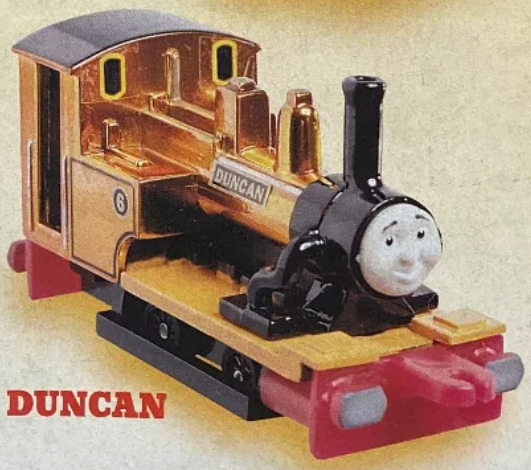


THOMAS



PERCY

RHENEAS



DUNCAN

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May contain small parts.

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